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# Fields of Study

A Texas Transfer Initiative

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Texas Higher Education  
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# What is FOS?

- Texas Education Code, Chapter 61, Section 61.823, Field of Study Curriculum: “If a student successfully completes a field of study curriculum developed by the board, that block of courses may be transferred to a general academic teaching institution and must be *substituted* for that institution's lower division requirements for the degree program for the field of study into which the student transfers, and the student shall receive full academic credit toward the *degree program* for the block of courses transferred.”

# FOS Basics

- **Substituted:** The FOS is the complete list of all the lower-division courses required for the major. Receiving institutions cannot add any additional lower-division requirements beyond the completed FOS.
- **Degree program:** FOS courses must apply as courses for the major. They can apply to the 120 SCH degree plan as core curriculum options, requirements for the major, or as designated electives.
- If a student completes only part of the FOS curriculum, then those courses must transfer into a degree program, and the receiving institution can require additional lower-division classes.
- A student can graduate with an associate degree if they have completed either
  - 1) the core curriculum or
  - 2) a Board-approved FOS.
- Each institution must note FOS courses on student transcripts.

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# FOS Part of a Portfolio of Transfer Student Initiatives

- Degree Plan and Advising
  - Required when a student accumulates 30 semester credit hours
- Core Curriculum
- *Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)*
- Common Course Numbering System
- Programs of Study

## 60x30TX Goals

- By 2030, at least 60 percent of Texans ages 25-34 will have a certificate or degree.
- By 2030, at least 550,000 students in that year will complete a certificate, associate, bachelor's, or master's from an institution of higher education in Texas.
- By 2030, all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills.
- By 2030, undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions.
- Full plan available here:  
<http://www.60x30tx.com/>

# How FOS Helps *60x30TX*

- *By 2030, undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions.*
- Reducing time to degree = reducing cost of degree
  - In 2017, native students took an average excess of 14 attempted SCH. Transfer students took 22 SCH (almost one full academic year).
  - Every course in a FOS is guaranteed to transfer and apply to a degree program.
  - Students who follow a FOS will know exactly what courses to take, and by omission what courses *not* to take, as soon as they enroll or begin taking dual-credit courses.

*Source: THECB Transfer Report 2017*

# How FOS Helps *60x30TX*

- *By 2030, undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions.*
- Students may end up paying twice for each course that is not accepted for transfer credit: once at the college, and once to replace it at the university.

2017 Averages	One Course	Two Courses	Three Courses	Four Courses	Seven Courses (average)
College Costs	\$301.80	\$603.60	\$905.40	\$1,207.20	\$2,112.60
University Costs	\$904.20	\$1,808.40	\$2,712.60	\$3,616.80	\$6,329.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,206</b>	<b>\$2,412</b>	<b>\$3,618</b>	<b>\$4,824</b>	<b>\$8,442</b>

# Completed FOS

Architecture	Criminal Justice	Fine Arts	Mechanical Engineering	Social Work
Biology	Computer Science	English Language & Literature	Mexican American Studies	Radio & Television
Business Administration	Drama	Health & Wellness	Music	Sociology
Chemical Engineering	Economics	History	Nursing	
Civil Engineering	Electrical Engineering	Journalism	Political Science	
Communications	Engineering Technology	Mathematics	Psychology	

## 27 FOS Cover 104 Active CIP Codes

- New guide for CIP reporting available at [www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos)
- CIP codes cover only active bachelor degree programs—more will be added as new degree programs are approved
- One FOS may cover degree programs in multiple CIP codes. For example, the Communications FOS covers these:
  - 09.0100 General Communications
  - 09.0101 Speech Communication
  - 09.0901 Organizational Communication
  - 09.0905 Health Communication
  - 09.0906 Sports Communication
  - 09.0907 International Communication
  - 09.0908 Technical and Scientific Communication

# Upcoming FOS

**Advertising & Public Relations**

**Communication Disorders**

**Human Development & Family Studies**

**Media Studies**

**Agricultural Business & Management**

**Environmental Science**

**Industrial Engineering**

**Multidisciplinary Studies (AAT)**

**Animal Sciences**

**Health Services**

**Kinesiology**

**Natural Resources Conservation & Research**

**Chemistry**

**Hospitality Administration**

**Mechanical Engineering (rev.)**

**Nutrition & Dietetics**

# Reporting FOS Completers

- New guide for CIP reporting available at [www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos)
- The Reporting Guide includes the primary CIP code number that covers all of the related programs. For example, all of the related Communications programs are reported under the CIP code 09.0100, General Communications.
- For swirling or dual-enrollment students, the last institution where a student completes the FOS is the one that does the reporting.
- Report FOS completers as soon as possible—there is no need to wait until the student completes the entire degree program.
- If a student completes more than one FOS, it's best to report just one. This is an issue for future TACRAO meetings.

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# Transfer Issues

- Dispute resolution:
  - Email the Coordinating Board. Specifics are helpful, and anonymity will be respected
  - Transfer Dispute Resolution Authority in Coordinating Board rules. The institutions must try to resolve the issue first, then a request in writing to the Commissioner of Higher Education

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# Transfer Issues

- How FOS courses transfer in:
  - Lower-division program requirements (ideal)
  - Core curriculum options
  - Designated electives
  - Free electives

All FOS courses *must* transfer and apply toward the 120-SCH degree program by law.

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# Transfer Issues

How can an institution include additional lower-division courses?

- It is the intention of the policy to have the FOS courses be the entire set of lower-division requirements for the major.
- If a course is required of all students in the university, College, or School, regardless of major, it can be required on top of the FOS.
- Lower-division courses can be offered as choices, but not requirements, as part of a list of designated electives.

# Transfer Issues

## Course offerings:

- No state requirement that institutions offer FOS courses, only that they must accept them for transfer.
- If you do not offer an equivalent course from the FOS, consider adding it to reduce the knowledge gap between native and transfer students.
- If you want to continue requiring the duplicate course at the upper-division level, consider adjusting it to have a more specialized focus.
- The priority should be not having students unnecessarily repeat course content.

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# Implementation Guide and FAQ

- Background information
- Sections for Administrators, Registrars & Institutional Researchers, Deans & Department Chairs, Faculty & Advisors
- Complete text of relevant statutes and rules
- FAQ

[www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/fos)

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## Noting FOS on Transcripts

Registrars are responsible for Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Chapter 4, Subchapter B, Rule 4.32(e) states that “Each institution must note field of study curriculum courses on student transcripts as recommended by the Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.”

- How should this be handled and formatted?
- How can it be standardized?

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# Questions or Comments?

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